



And Paris to Oenone;
And Jason to Isiphile;
And eft Jason to Medea;
And Eracles to Dyanira;
for he left hir for Iole,
That made him cacche his deeth, parde.

NO fals eek was he, Theseus;
That, as the story telleth us,
How he betrayed Adriane;
The devel be his soules bane!
for had he laughed, had he loured,
He moste have be al devoured,
If Adriane ne had ybe!
And, for she had of him pitee,
She made him fro the dethe escape,
And he made hir a ful fals jape;
for after this, within a whyle
He left hir slepinge in an yle,
Deserte alone, right in the see,
And stal away, and leet hir be;
And took hir suster Phedra tho
With him, and gan to shippe go.
And yet he had ysworn to here,
On al that ever he mighte swere,
That, so she saved him his lyf;
He wolde have take hir to his wyf;
for she desired nothing elles,
In certein, as the book us telles.

BUT to excusen Eneas
fulliche of al his greet trespass,
The book seyth, Mercurie, sauns
faile,
Bad him go into Itaile,
And leve Auffyrykes regoun,

HO saw I grave, how to Itaile
Daun Eneas is go to saile;
And how the tempest al began,
And how he loste his steresman,
Which that the stere, or he took keep,
Smot overbord, lo! as he sleep.

AND also saw I how Sibyle
And Eneas, besyde an yle,
To helle wente, for to see
his fader, Anchises the free.
How he ther fond Palinurus,
And Dido, and eek Deiphobus;
And every tourment eek in helle
Saw he, which is long to telle.
Which whoso willet for to knowe,
He moste rede many a rowe
On Virgile or on Claudian,
Or Daunte, that hit telle can.

HO saw I grave at tharivaile
That Eneas had in Itaile;
And with king Latine his tretce,

And alle the batailles that he
Was at himself, and eek his knyghtes,
Or he had al ywonne his rightes;
And how he Turnus refte his lyf,
And wan Lavyna to his wyf;
And al the mervelous signals
Of the goddes celestials;
How, maugre Juno, Eneas,
for al hir sleighte and hir compas,
Acheved al his aventure;
for Jupiter took of him cure
At the prayere of Venus;
The whiche I preye alway save us,
And us ay of our sorwes lighte!

WHAN I had seyen al this sighte
In this noble temple thus,
H, Lord! thoughte I, that madest us,
Yet saw I never swich noblesse
Of images, ne swich richesse,
As I saw graven in this chirche;
But not woot I who dide hem wirche,
Ne wher I am, ne in what contree.
But now wol I go out and see,
Right at the wicket, if I can
See owher stering any man,
That may me telle wher I am.

WHEN I out at the dores cam,
I faste aboute me beheld,
Then saw I but a large feld,

As fer as that I mighte see,
Withouten toun, or hous, or tree,
Or bush, or gras, or cred lond;
for al the feld nas but of sond
As smal as man may see yet tye
In the desert of Libye;
Ne I no maner creature,
That is yformed by nature,
Ne saw, me for to rede or wisse.
O Crist, thoughte I, that art in blisse,
fro fantom and illusioun
Me save! and with devocioun
Myn yen to the heven I caste.

HO was I war, lo! at the laste,
That faste by the sonne, as hye
As kenne mighte I with myn ye,
Me thoughte I saw an egle sore,
But that hit semed moche more
Then I had any egle seyn.
But this as sooth as deeth, certeyn,
Hit was of golde, and shoon so bryghte,
That never saw men such a sighte,
But if the heven hadde ywonne
Al newe of golde another sonne;
So shoon the egles fethres bryghte,
And somewhat downward gan hit lighte.

Explicit Liber Primus.

THE HOUSE OF FAME. LIBER SECUNDUS.

Incipit Liber Secundus. Proem.



BERKNETH, EVERY MANER MAN

That English understonde can,
And listeth of my dreem to lere;
for now at erste shul ye here
So selly an avisoun,
That Isaye, ne Scipoun,
Ne king Nabugodonosor,
Dhoro, Turnus, ne Eleanor,
Ne mette swich a dreem as this!
Now faire blisful, O Cipris,
So be my favour at this tyme!

And ye, me to endyte and ryme
Helpeth, that on Parnaso dwelle
By Elicon the clere welle.

THOUGH, that wroot al that I mette,
And in the tresorie hit shette
Of my brayn! now shal men see
If any vertu in thee be,
To tellen al my dreem aright;
Now kythe thyng engyn and might!

The Dream.

THIS egle, of which I
have yow told,
That shoon with feth-
res as of gold,
Which that so hye gan
to sore,
I gan beholde more
and more,
To see hir beautee and
the wonder;

But never was ther dint of thonder,
Ne that thing that men calle foudre,
That smoot somtyme a tour to poudre,
And in his swifte coming brende,
That so swythe gan descende,
As this foul, whan hit behelde
That I aroume was in the felde;
And with his grimme pawes stronge,
Within his sharpe nayles longe,
Me, fleinge, at a swappe he hente,
And with his sours agayn up wente.